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Patent Claims

1. An operating and display unit (1) for switching devices in a motor vehicle, having at least one operating element and having a symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11') which is associated with the operating element (3, 5, 7, 9, 11), is arranged in a fixed manner at a geometrically determined point in relation to said operating element (3, 5, 7, 9, 11), and has the purpose of displaying a symbol which is assigned to the device to be switched,
characterized
in that the symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11') is embodied using black panel technology.

2. The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 1,
characterized
in that the symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11') can be backlit by means of search lighting and/or functional lighting.

3. The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 1 or 2,
characterized
in that the symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11') is embodied in such a way that it has a uniformly dark appearance in the state when there is no backlighting.

4. The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 1 or 2,
characterized
in that the symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11') is embodied in such a way that the at least one symbol can be recognized or is displayed even in the state when there is no backlighting.

5. The operating and display unit as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4,
characterized
in that a plurality of symbols can be displayed simultaneously or successively in the symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11').

6. The operating and display unit as claimed in one of claims 1 to 5,
characterized
in that the operating element (3, 5, 7, 9, 11) is embodied without symbols.

7. The operating and display unit as claimed in one of claims 1 to 6,
characterized
in that the symbols can each be displayed at the point which is the same geometrically or at points which are arranged offset with respect to one another within the symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11').

8. The operating and display unit as claimed in one of claims 1 to 7,
characterized
in that the operating element (3, 5, 7, 9, 11) is formed by a pushbutton key, in particular a rocker key, which is provided with a structure for improving the haptics.

9. The operating and display unit as claimed in claim 8,
characterized
in that the projected touch face of the pushbutton key is at least a quarter, preferably at least a third, in particular more than half smaller than the projected face of the symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11').

10. The operating and display unit as claimed in one of claims 1 to 9,
characterized
in that each operating element (3, 5, 7, 9, 11) is assigned a symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11'), the symbol display fields (3', 5', 7', 9', 11') being arranged in series, and the transition between symbol display fields (3', 5', 7', 9', 11') which are arranged adjacent to one another is invisible, or virtually invisible, to the user by virtue of the black panel effect.

11. The operating and display unit as claimed in one of claims 1 to 10,
characterized by
a switch-over device for optionally allocating to the operating element (3, 5, 7, 9, 11) a function which is assigned to a specific device, the function being selectable from a number of functions of a plurality of devices, and in that in each case the symbol which is assigned to the function which is determined by the selection of the allocation of the operating element (3, 5, 7, 9, 11) is displayed in the symbol display field (3', 5', 7', 9', 11').